

**NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY
NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE**

Remove Threat for the World and Establish Peace for Iraq and the

Region

A Strategy for Iraq

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*“Our Nation’s cause has always been larger than our Nation’s defense.
We fight, as we always fight, for a just peace—a peace that favors liberty.
We will defend the peace against the threats from terrorists and tyrants.
We will preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers.
And we will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent.”*

PRESIDENT BUSH
WEST POINT, NEW YORK
JUNE 1, 2002

1. Introduction

After the 1991 Gulf War Iraq has again developed into a threat to regional stability and into a risk to world peace. National and international studies¹ delineate the capabilities and the risks of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in a dictatorial Iraq under Saddam Hussein. More than forty UN resolutions within the last eleven years have failed to persuade or coerce the Iraqi government into giving up WMD and into a more peaceful and democratic policy. Although containment has worked so far, the danger of supporting terrorists with WMD has increased after the UN weapons inspectors (UNSCOM) were barred from Iraq in December 1998. These WMD, in the hands of terrorists, could pose a direct threat to the U.S. national security, or they could be used to threaten countries in the region.

This strategy for peace in the region and prevention of risks to the U.S. will address and develop the following thesis:

The U.S. must pursue a multilateral strategy to achieve the goal of peace and security in the region.

The strategy specifically aims at destroying all WMD, the production sites, and the delivery means, because they provide Saddam with the ultimate military means for regional dominance.

¹ Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction – The Assessment of the British Government, (London, Sep 2002)

The following analysis is based on information available up to October 12, 2002. In the first part different options for a strategy shall be discussed based on an assumed endstate for Iraq. This endstate will go beyond a possible war. The strategy paper covers a threat and risk analysis and considers the recently published National Security Strategy (NSS). The *Deibel Model* serves as the analytical tool and structure for the first part of the essay. The analysis is not going to elaborate on economic impacts and interdependencies in the region. Although access to oil does play an important role, as Iraq holds 11% of all known oil reserves, its influence is mainly the same for all discussed options.

The second part of the essay will follow the analytical *Framework for Military Strategy*. The internal and international setting and constraints will be addressed. The use of force, in so far it is recommended in the first part of the analysis, is to be examined. However, for the purpose of this paper the military details of employment options will not be evaluated. Options will be measured against the various theories on war, specifically from Clausewitz, Liddell Hart, and air war theorists. The paper assesses principle courses of action (COAs) for a war with Iraq and a post-war stability. The leading idea for the proposals made is the observation of Liddell Hart: “The object of war is a better state of peace - It is essential to conduct war with constant regard to the peace you desire.”²

2. Discussion

2.1 Political Strategy

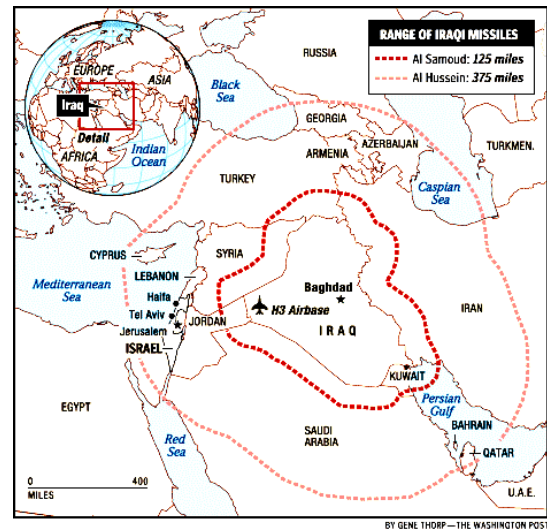
2.1.1 Threat Analysis

President Bush stated in his September 12 address to the UN: “In 1991, the Iraqi regime agreed to destroy and stop developing all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, and to prove to the world it has done so by complying with rigorous inspections. Iraq has broken

² B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, (London, Faber & Faber Ltd., 1991), Page 338

every aspect of this fundamental pledge.”³ In a September 2002 report the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) concluded that Iraq most likely does not have any nuclear weapons. However, if the country were able to acquire fissile material from foreign sources, Iraq would be able to assemble nuclear weapons within months.

Despite UNSCOM, IISS observed, Iraq still possesses a stockpile of biological and chemical weapons. Iraq owns up to 30 ballistic missiles with a range of 600-650 km. Other missiles range mainly to only some 200-250 km. Thus, even if Saddam had nuclear weapons they would only pose



low direct risks to the U.S. security. Assuming they were delivered by missile, however, with this range Iraq could threaten the NATO ally Turkey, Israel and parts of the Arab world with WMD. A chemical or biological threat to the U.S. only exists within the framework of terrorist use. IISS concludes its report on WMD with: “Wait and the threat will grow; strike and the threat may be used.”⁴

The independent IISS dossier, the above-mentioned assessment of the British Government, and U.S. estimates come to the same principle capability based threat assessment. Iraq possesses B and C weapons, has tried to acquire A weapons and has at its avail delivery means that range up to 650 Km.

As threat is based on capability and will, the latter shall also briefly be addressed. Within 34 years of Saddam’s dictatorship Iraq has fought wars against Iran and Kuwait, has threatened Saudi-Arabia, has attacked Israel and has used chemical weapons against its own population. The will to threaten the use or to use military capabilities, including WMD, is apparent. So far,

³ George W. Bush, Address to the UN on Sep 12, The Washington Post, Sep 13, 2002 page A31

⁴ Iraq WMD Dossier Statement, IISS, London, Sep 9 2002

Iraq has only used WMD against an opponent lacking this capability. Regional dominance with the ultimate aim of at least balancing Israel seems to be Saddam's main goal.

2.1.2 Risk Analysis

This brief analysis addresses the risks based on above threat evaluation for the U.S. and for the region. Because of the restricted means of delivery, the danger for mainland U.S. remains small. However, any use of WMD against the U.S., although it might cause only limited direct damage, could have an extremely negative impact on the economy, similar to the September 11 terrorist attacks. Nevertheless, more clear attention must be paid to the perils for the region. Both, the risks posed by an Iraq that will remain possessing WMD, and the risks of waging war against Saddam Hussein in order to destroy these WMD, need to be assessed.

Saddam's Iraq has proven twice within the previous 20 years that it is willing and capable to wage war against its neighbours in order to gain regional dominance. There is no reason to believe Saddam Hussein might have changed this principal stance. Threatening the use of WMD might give him the edge required to achieve this goal and to counterbalance Israel. However, if the survival of the regime or the country were not at stake, it is unlikely that the Iraqi regime would use B and C weapons or nuclear weapons, if finally acquired, because it must fear the U.S'. or Israel's retaliation. "During the gulf war, we knew Iraq had chemical weapons, and our intelligence estimated that they could have killed as many as 10,000 U.S. soldiers with them. Why didn't they use them? Because they knew that it would be the end of Baghdad."⁵

In case of waging war against Iraq, with the ultimate goal of overthrowing the current government, the risk of destabilizing the entire region must be considered. The most important

⁵ David Glenn, 'Realist' Foreign-Policy Scholars Denounce Push to Attack Iraq, Chronicle of Higher Education, Thursday, September 26, 2002

danger from a Turkish point of view seems to be the perceived aim of Kurds to establish their own nation. This would directly lead to internal problems for Turkey. The Kurdish distribution is shown on the map. Some ten million Kurds reside inside Turkey. Twenty-percent (some 3.8 - 4 Mil) of the Iraqi population is Kurdish. Any post war strategy should consider this fact.



The Israel-Palestine conflict needs also to be contemplated. If the U.S. and her allies were not able to help in solving or at least addressing this problem, with a clear roadmap beforehand, the Arab world might not support any U.S. military action. The regional Arab countries see Iraq as the only country able to balance Israeli power. Furthermore, the Saudis are concerned that a unilateral U.S. attack could create unwanted repercussions for American interests throughout the region. The Arabic countries are even more concerned about what would follow the collapse of the Iraqi regime. The post-Taliban Afghanistan does not yet provide a positive example.

2.1.3 Political Endstate

The political endstate to be achieved, based on the NSS⁶, is to eliminate a threat to the U.S. and her allies and friends. In addition to this elimination, a better and more stable peace for the region must be attained. Consequently, the **short-term** goal is to detect, control and eliminate all WMD. The **medium-term** goal must be to achieve a regime change without changing the political geography, the power balance and borders. And thirdly, the **long-term** endstate must encompass the promotion of democracy, liberty and free market economy throughout the Middle East in order to prevent further conflict in the foreseeable future.

⁶ National Security Strategy, Washington, D.C., Sep 2002

2.1.4 Internal Framework

Internally the U.S government's policy has to obtain public and congressional support. Vietnam as a negative example and Desert Storm as a positive illustration may underline this argument. A September 24 Gallup poll⁷ suggests, that public support is best given, if the U.S. acts multilaterally.

Range of Support for U.S. Military Action Against Iraq		
	Favor	Oppose
	%	%
In general	57	38
If other countries participate in invading Iraq	79	18
If the United Nations supports invading Iraq	79	19
If Congress supports invading Iraq	69	28
If the United States has to invade Iraq alone	38	59
If the United Nations opposes invading Iraq	37	58
If Congress opposes invading Iraq	37	59

Below 40% would support a unilateral attack or any attack that was not backed by Congress or by the UN. Congressional backing of any U.S. action, including war, is given.⁸ The Gallup poll strongly suggests that the U.S. must develop a multilateral strategy for Iraq. The NSS emphasizes that a unilateral approach could be pursued, if required.

2.1.5 International Framework

Most important for any action is a UN resolution. Without a Security Council Resolution (SCR), it seems to be unlikely that the U.S. can build up sufficient international support for any coercive strategy or a coalition for a possible war. A SCR must include a robust mandate with

⁷ Gallup poll September 24 2002 on Public Support for U.S. Military Action Against Iraq

⁸ Washington Post Oct 02: "The President is authorized to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary an appropriate in order to

(1) defend the National security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and
(2) enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions regarding Iraq.

clear deadlines and should be backed by force. Several dozen SCR's concerning Iraq have been passed between 1990 and 2001. Even the ones with a compellence aim did not attain their intent.⁹ Force was required in 1991 to achieve Iraq's compliance. After the war in 1991 Iraq promised to provide any support necessary to destroy its WMD and long-range missiles. Iraq did not comply with this promise and ceased cooperation with the UN in 1998.¹⁰ A robust mandate certainly has to include the use of military and the option of war in case of non-compliance.

"Europeans are willing to use force in a wide variety of circumstances and strongly support multilateral approaches to solving international problems."¹¹ Looking at the influential European countries, only Germany still resists supporting the use of military force. Britain acts as the strongest supporter of the United States' military proposal. France pursues an independent policy since she wants neither to abandon her specific relationship to most Arab nations nor to lose her economic impact in the area. Arab allies also seem to be reluctant to support a U.S. led war, although they would like to see a different leadership in Iraq. "Any military action will destabilize the area."¹² It seems to be obvious that militarily backed inspection teams as well as direct military action and a possible nation-building task requires multilateral support.

2.1.6 Means

Principally all means of soft-power and hard-power available could be utilized to achieve the political aims. However, not all available means are suited and fit the specific problem. For the short-term goal, the detection and destruction of WMD, compellence with a threat of force could meet the requirement. This threat must be credible. The Kosovo campaign provides a

⁹ e.g. SCR 660 that demanded Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal. Or SCR 678 that authorized Member States ... "to use all necessary means" to bring Iraq into compliance with previous Security Council resolutions if it did not do so by 15 January 1991.

¹⁰ President Bush's Address to the UN, The Washington Post, September 13, 2002

¹¹ Worldviews 2002 Full Findings - Americans Strongly Prefer Multilateralism in War and Peace, 2 Oct 2002

¹² Sheik Hamad al-Thani, foreign minister of Qatar, USA Today, September 13, 2002

valuable lesson for that. “..., decisive force – rather than gradualism – was precisely what was required to make “compellence” a sure success, along with the diplomacy to produce the “way out” for the loser”.¹³ Thus, diplomatic means backed by force seem to promise success.

“The UN Security Council ...placed Iraq under an international sanctions regime in order to compel it to comply with the conditions of Resolution 687, which includes the destruction of its CBW and the termination of the CBW-related programmes under international supervision. In November 2001 the Security Council extended the sanctions regime, which had previously been modified in an attempt to gain Iraqi cooperation. Earlier, UNMOVIC revised and refined the list of items and materials whose transfer to Iraq is controlled.”¹⁴ Economic sanctions and political isolation have failed. Both remain ineffective, because Iraq has circumvented economic sanctions by carefully improving relations to neighbouring states and drawing them into economically dependent relationships.¹⁵ Consequently, neither of the two should alone be pursued any further.

For the medium term and long-term goals, regime change and a stabilised, democratised region, public diplomacy, foreign aid and the influence of soft-power might be best suited. In order to achieve credibility with the Iraqi people, these means must be exercised by multilateral and regional efforts. Otherwise, U.S. cultural dominance could end up being counterproductive. It is of utmost importance that the U.S. and her Western allies avoid being seen as Christian neo-imperialists or Jewish led aggressors who are only interested in dominating an oil-rich region.

2.1.7 Ways

During the discussion of possible ways, courses of action (COA) for the U.S., it does not seem to be suitable to distinguish clearly between short-, medium- and long-term aims. They are

¹³ Wesley K. Clark, Waging Modern War, (Oxford, PublicAffairsLtd, 2001), Page 7

¹⁴ SIPRI Yearbook 2002; Chemical and biological weapon developments and arms control, chapter 12, p 705

¹⁵ Testimony of Director of CIA, George J. Tenet, before Senate Armed Services Committee, 19 March 2002

interdependent. A medium-term aim could also be achieved in a very short timeframe through adequate means. In the following, only a unilateral approach and a multilateral one are evaluated. The multilateral approach will be subdivided in: firstly, the use of weapons inspectors backed by force, and secondly, the destruction of WMD, delivery and development capabilities directly without previous inspections. All COAs have in common, that through foreign aid, public diplomacy and soft-power the long-term goals should be achieved.

COA 1- A U.S. unilateral action to disarm Iraq would undoubtedly mean to launch an attack against Iraq. This COA is approved by Congress and is feasible. Destruction of all WMD through war would require occupying the country after having won the war. Only through occupation an almost total destruction of WMD could be achieved.

COA 2 – U.S. supports UN weapons inspection teams to detect and destroy WMD, delivery means, and development capabilities. No direct military threat linked to that option.

COA 3 - U.S. supports UN weapons inspection teams to detect and destroy WMD and builds up direct multinational threat in order to achieve compliance with a SCR. This COA could be pursued with either one (U.S. proposal) or two (France, Russia proposal) UN resolutions. Inherent in this COA is a high likelihood of war with Iraq.

2.1.8 Comparison of Options

Options	Cost	Risk to U.S.	Risk for Region	Likelihood of Success
COA 1	High financial cost. More expensive than war 91. Negative influence on economy and stock market.	High personnel risks. Long-term damage because of unilateral approach. Iraq likely to use WMD. Enforces more desperate terrorist attacks.	Destabilizes region. Extremists could gain superiority over moderates. Israel and Turkey (Kurds) might suffer directly.	High. WMD will be destroyed. Regime change will be fostered immediately. Problem to achieve long-term stability.

COA 2	Low financial costs. UN and international community funds.	Low. Long term risk given, if inspectors are unsuccessful.	High. Iraq could undermine compellence through “salami tactics”, acquire nukes and create regional dominance.	Low. Saddam might get the wrong signals and perceive he could continue with a time gaining policy.
COA 3	Initially medium costs. Costs would increase if inspectors failed. But they would remain smaller than in COA 1 because of multinationality.	Initially low. Later (in case of war) possible high personnel risks.	Medium. Multilateral and Islamic countries’ backed approach limits risk for destabilizing the region.	High. WMD will either be detected and destroyed by UN teams or though warfighting force. Long-term stability seems less endangered.

COA 1 does have a high likelihood of accomplishing the aim. However, it is combined with a high degree of risk and may have too many long-term disadvantages. Some U.S. government officials estimate that any serious threat would lead to a coup in Iraq and thus eliminate the negative factors described for COA 1.¹⁶ History has shown that this possibility is highly unlikely. Dictatorial systems (e.g. Nazi-Germany or North Vietnam) are unlikely to crumble when being threatened. The U.S. will undoubtedly succeed in a war against Iraq. But unilateralism would make it unbearably difficult to rebuild an Iraq after the war. Moreover, a unilateral war could distract too much from the war against terrorism. “We cannot fight a second monumental struggle without detracting from the first one.”¹⁷ COA 2 may encompass initial low costs and low risks, but is highly likely to have long-term disadvantages. Saddam is likely to not cooperate with the inspectors. Consequently, the recommended option is COA 3. This COA has the greatest flexibility, the highest degree of goal accomplishment by calculable risks and costs. However, the overriding criterion for COA 3 is that this multilateral approach has the best chances to achieve long-term stability by meeting at the same time short- and medium-term

¹⁶ Attack may spark Iraqi Coup, The Washington Post, October 6, 2002

¹⁷ Madeleine K. Albright, Where Iraq Fits in the War on Terror, The Washington Post, Sep 13, 2002

goals. If the UN inspectors failed to disarm Saddam within a UN predetermined timeframe, the international community would have to go to war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. In this case the ethical question of waging war arises. Backed by a UN resolution any military attack would be just and justified.

2.1.9 Conclusion and Recommendation

The comparison of options clearly leads to the recommendation to support a UN resolution for re-establishing the weapons inspectors in Iraq. This determined diplomacy must be backed by force. The inspections are to be based on a robust mandate. The teams should be protected and directly supported by an international military force. If Saddam did not comply within a preset timeframe, multinational force should be used to destroy all WMD, delivery means, and development capability. War then must lead to a regime change, but should avoid total disarmament. In this case, a post war peacekeeping force has to remain in country to avoid a split up of Iraq with a destabilizing effect for Turkey and the remainder of the region. This approach will create the best conditions for a long-term change and stabilization through democratisation in the region. However, the latter will only be successful, if the U.S. is able to address the Israel-Palestine conflict properly and promotes democracy in other neighbouring states through, initially, unconditional engagement.

2.2 War Strategy

2.2.1 Overview and Assumptions

If a war was to be fought, the assumption must be made that Saddam misread the situation totally and would not act rationally, at least not following Western notions of rationality. As already discussed above, this analysis will only consider the multilateral approach

as the most promising road to achieve long-term goals. Nevertheless, it should be stressed again, in accordance with the NSS, Congressional backing, and the capabilities of the U.S. military, a unilateral approach to defeat Iraq would be possible.

The second assumption is that an attack on Iraq will not directly and immediately lead to an uprising of the people and a coup. Thirdly, Saddam would make use of all means at his disposal, including chemical and biological weapons. Fourthly, moderate Arab states, as well as Russia, China and the Europeans, would support a UN backed attack on Iraq. For Russia and China it is a question of the price, for the Europeans of the post-war economic influence.

Keeping these assumptions in mind and following some theoretical principles, a war strategy has to develop a strategic situation so advantageous, “that if it does not of itself produce the decision, its continuation by a battle is sure to achieve this.”¹⁸

2.2.2 Risk Analysis

The risk assessment in this paragraph will only look at war and combat risks. The already stated risks from paragraph 2.1.2 will not be repeated. The major military risk would arise from the possible use of biological and chemical weapons. The capabilities are available. The willingness to use them rests in the personality of Saddam Hussein. A ruthless and unscrupulous dictator who is only able to rule his country through terror is likely to make use of all weapons at hand.¹⁹ It is estimated that he killed some 180,000 Kurds after the Gulf War, mainly through chemical weapons. On the brink of defeat, he might rather sacrifice his people, as Hitler did at the end of WW II, than acting rational. The second most dangerous risk for the Allied military is to be forced into urban area fighting.

¹⁸ B.H. Liddell Hart, Strategy, (London, Faber & Faber Ltd., 1991), Page 352

¹⁹ “... his tactic of imposing his authority by terror has gone far beyond the occasional arrest and execution of opponents. In attempts to suppress the Kurds, for example, he has systematically used chemical weapons. And in putting down a rebellion of Shi’ia in the south he has razed towns to the ground and drained marshland.” A Saddam Hussein Profile in BBC News, January 4, 2001

It seems to be certain that Iraq will try to draw Israel into a war in order to alienate Arab allies from the U.S. Cornered and expecting to lose and to be overthrown, Saddam is also likely to attack Israel with WMD. This move would, assuming that he did not survive an attack, probably raise him to martyr status in the Arab world. Although Israel already threatened to use nuclear weapons in this case, it seems to be a calculable risk for Saddam. He can almost be sure, that Israel would refrain from the use of “nukes” as long as U.S. or Allied soldiers were affected because of their proximity to possible targets.

Saddam’s best chances to survive and to end a war with the U.S. are to drag the U.S. military into Baghdad. He will certainly have learnt his lesson from Moghadishu.

In summary, allied forces must be prepared for chemical, biological and urban warfare. Israel must expect a biological or chemical attack. The American and the world population should also be prepared to face these risks.

2.2.3 Military Objectives Including Centre of Gravity

The Allied military objectives must be to destroy all WMD and means of delivery, decapitate or destroy Republican Guards, to achieve unconditional surrender, which certainly will result in a regime change, and to establish preconditions for a democratic development process in a still unified Iraq. This post-conflict setting requires many peacekeeping troops on the ground.²⁰ These forces must be made available in region prior to an attack in order to prevent a power vacuum and civil unrest and new safe havens for terrorist groups.

Following the Clausewitzian principle, the strategic centre of gravity (COG) for Iraq is its leadership and its rationale, however irrational it might seem to be for Westerners. The

²⁰ A UN international advisory group looked in 2001 into the requirement of peacekeepers for Afghanistan and concluded in its report that in order to achieve the same level of security as in Kosovo or in East Timor, 300,000 to 500,000 peacekeepers would be required. This estimate could serve as a basis for any post war peacekeeping operation in Iraq.

operational COG comprises of all WMD and their respective delivery means. Destroying these takes Saddam's capabilities away to attack a coalition's COG, the coalition itself. This coalition is specifically dependent on Israel's behaviour. As Saddam does not gain his strength and does not legitimate his power from people and their passion, despite the recent elections, a military strategy only needs to avoid turning the Iraqi people into enemies. This requires clear limitations on collateral damage. Although "the power to hurt is bargaining power (and) to exploit it is diplomacy ..."²¹, this hurting power should not be used against the Iraqi population. To inflict suffering only achieves its aim if the leadership is receptive. Saddam is not.

Saddam's military objective will be to draw Israel into the war to split any fragile coalition and to inflict as many casualties as possible to the U.S. in order to increase internal resistance (Vietnam effect). He might also try to prolong a war to a maximum by defending key cities (Baghdad and his home town Tikrit) only and draw coalition forces into urban fighting. His strategy could be backed by direct terrorist attacks with compellent aims on the homeland U.S. and her allies. He will use the media to stiffen American and European war resistance.

2.2.4 Multilateral Force Option – Capabilities and Vulnerabilities

According to Central command estimates,²² Iraq's military is able to field some 700,000 active and reserve troops with some 2,200 main battle tanks and an estimated 2,000 artillery guns. Of these troops, 48,000 – 60,000 are organized in Republican Guard divisions. One of these divisions is most likely assigned the task to protect Saddam Hussein.

Because of the no-fly zones, Iraq has deployed its ground forces mainly in and around Baghdad. Tikrit, the hometown of Saddam and most of his closest supporters, also appears to be heavily defended. Iraq's air force, with some 30,000 personnel and about 316 combat aircraft, is

²¹ Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), page 2

²² Iraq would Try to Fight Urban War, *The Washington Post*, September 27, 2002

no match for the U.S. and possible Allies. Only the ground based air defence systems could pose a threat²³. The navy with 6 patrol boats is negligible.

The U.S. Air Force could be made available with sufficient combat aircraft, the Navy could support with aircraft and cruise missiles, the Marine Corps and the Army also have overwhelming capabilities. The Army, however, would require a build-up and preparation time of about 3 months in region. In comparison to the Gulf War in 1991, Iraq's technical capabilities have not improved. On the contrary, estimates state that only 50% of the high tech aircraft (MiG-29 and Mirage F-1's) are mission capable. The capability of the U.S. forces, specifically the Air Force, however, is drastically increased. The current weaponry is more than 10 times as capable as 10 years ago.²⁴

In conclusion, the U.S. has all military options available without compromising the war on terrorism²⁵. These options range from unrelenting air attacks combined with special operations forces to a massive ground offensive. The left spectrum of the options could be made available within weeks, the heavy land force option in about 3 months after a decision. It seems to be highly likely that the British would offer up to one division and supporting air and maritime forces. The French would support with roughly the same combat power as the British in order to have a say in the post war Iraq. Other Western contributions are most likely to be militarily negligible, although politically paramount. Turkey could be assumed to follow any U.S ground attack from the north to strengthen its troops in northern Iraq, specifically around the oil-rich, disputed city Kirkuk, and in order to avoid a power vacuum in the Kurdish part of Iraq. The neighbouring Arab countries are expected to support an attack primarily by providing staging areas and air bases.

²³ The Military Balance, Time, May 13, 2002

²⁴ The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Aerospace Daily, Sep 19, 2002

²⁵ The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in: DoD News Briefing Sep 3, 2002. Gen Meyers contradicts Madeleine Albright's views, which may be seen more from a political point of view instead of a capability based position.

2.2.5 Strategic Concept

In Saddam Hussein's Iraq, one could argue, the Clausewitzian trinity comprised of Government and rationality, military commander and creativity, and people and passion is not in balance. The people are oppressed and the top commanders are highly dependent on the political leader. Consequently, the most successful approach toward a fast victory seems to be through attacking the political leadership and decapitating the military. This approach will further upset the triangle's balance. However, the question remains on how to approach the attack of the political leadership while at the same time minimizing the above-mentioned risks.

Two possible COAs will be discussed. Both are able of achieving the military aim and creating the preconditions for the stated political goals. Both COAs are direct approaches. Any indirect approach will at this stage –after weapons inspections supported by force have failed – not achieve the aim.

COA 1 (Joint option with main focus on Air operations): Use air and naval assets supported by Special Forces in order to take out simultaneously the enemy's political command centres, the WMD capabilities including means of delivery, and the military command and control efficiency. Isolate Baghdad from other population centres by cutting all lines of communications. This option is assumed to lead to an internal revolt and a regime change. Further military capabilities would not need to be destroyed. The population should not be attacked at all.

COA 2 (Joint option with main focus on ground operations): Use joint forces after having achieved air supremacy and after having attacked WMD sites of concern with Special Forces. Attack Iraq from the north (Turkey) and south (Kuwait) simultaneously in order to take out the leadership, destroy known WMD sites and break military resistance. Avoid being drawn into urban area fighting by only isolating the key cities. Finally pacify the population by

occupying the country. This move is expected to find most of the WMD sites and allow installing a new government during an occupation period. Ground forces would have to occupy the Iraqi oil fields. "...there would be little to prevent Saddam from destroying them as a final act of vengeance, just as he destroyed Kuwait's oil fields in 1991.”²⁶

Options	Time	Risk to U.S.	Risk for Region	Likelihood of Success
COA 1	Not time critical. Could be executed within weeks after decision.	Low personnel risks. Military would only be exposed in relatively small numbers to WMD attacks.	High. With no ground forces available civil unrest could not be controlled.	Medium
COA 2	Time critical. Will require major troop movements into the region.	High personnel risks. Many soldiers would be exposed to possible WMD attacks.	Low. Opposition in staging areas could be controlled.	High

The recommended strategic concept follows COA 2. Despite the stated disadvantages and risks for U.S. and coalition personnel, it encompasses the highest degree of mission accomplishment. An attack from the north and south simultaneously, followed by a move toward Baghdad and Tirkrit, could exactly develop that kind of advantageous strategic situation, where a continuation of the battle would produce the decision. The likelihood that air operations will create an environment in which the Iraqi people would oust Saddam seems to be remote. The overriding criterion for COA 2 is that it creates the best military preconditions for a relatively smooth regime change and long-term stability in the region.

²⁶ Kenneth M. Pollack; Next Stop Baghdad?, Foreign Affairs, March, April 2002

2.2.6 Potential Results and Road from Military to political Endstate

At the end of the war a U.S. dominated coalition force will have occupied all of Iraq. Most WMD stocks, laboratories and launch facilities will be known or destroyed within the following months. Saddam is likely to be captured or killed, a new government installed. The occupation force now has to be replaced by a peacekeeping force. The international community must partake in nation-building on a by far broader basis than in the war. Of utmost importance is to avoid a break-up of Iraq and outside perception of imperialistic rule. Nevertheless, the Kurdish minority in the north and the Shiites in the south will expect a greater degree of independence. These expectations have to be met in order to avoid further turbulences. The Arab neighbours should be encouraged to take active part in peacekeeping and nation-building. Only their participation will avoid the perception that the war against Saddam Hussein was a religiously motivated war.

2.2.7 Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended to pursue a war strategy directed against the leadership of Iraq and against the WMD storage and possible launch facilities. A combined and joint campaign should be executed despite high risks for own military personnel. Only a combined (multinational) campaign will be publicly supported. Only a joint campaign with an almost parallel use of air and ground forces will prevent chaos. Prior to the outbreak of combat, a multinational peacekeeping force needs to be organized, backed by a UN resolution. In addition, the Iraqi opposition in the U.S. and other Western countries should be prepared to take on some responsibilities in a post-war Iraq. The U.S. should use her strong presence in the region to coerce Israel and Palestine into a peaceful agreement for coexistence. If not, the mid-term aim and the long-term aim for Iraq and the entire region are at stake. An active engagement policy

focusing primarily on Egypt and Saudi Arabia, including foreign aid and public diplomacy, must pave the road toward more democracy in the region.

3. Summary

The aim of this paper was to develop a strategy for Iraq, dealing with the threat posed by Saddam Hussein and his perceived aim to achieve regional dominance through WMD. The first part discussed a political strategy that included the threat of war. In the second part the principles of a war strategy were addressed.

It seems to be apparent that only a multilateral approach in dealing with Saddam Hussein's Iraq would be fully successful. Although unilateral action is backed by the Congress and in line with the NSS, it lacks the popular support. Unilateralism endangers a positive development of the region, alienates America from her allies, and puts a heavy long-term burden on the U.S.

The approach toward Iraq should explore first diplomatic means and seek to get UN and allied backing for a robust weapons inspectors' mandate. Included in that mandate must be the threat of force in case of non-compliance. In order to avoid in situ problems, the teams must be protected and supported by military force. As discussed, isolation and economic embargo are not able to coerce Saddam. However, they should remain in place till the desired outcome of destruction of WMD, production facilities and delivery capability is achieved. The goal is disarmament. Only if that cannot be achieved through this new and robust, militarily supported UN mandate, should the next, the belligerent step, be taken. Political and military leaders responsible "...must recognize ... that once the struggle of competing wills ensues, it may not be possible to stop before reaching the end of the road."²⁷

²⁷ Wesley K. Clark, Waging Modern War, (Oxford, PublicAffairsLtd, 2001), Page 461

A multinational war against Saddam must be waged in case he does not fully comply with a new UN resolution. The war aim has to go further than destruction of WMD, production facilities and delivery means. Non-compliance with the UN means Saddam Hussein and his tribal clan from Tikrit have to be removed from power. For the sake of post war stability a Gulf War I type of coalition is required as is the employment of strong and heavy ground forces.

Shiites in the South and Kurds in the North should not be betrayed again. A post-Saddam Iraq needs to give both a higher degree of autonomy in a unified and probably federal system. Iraqi opposition outside the country should be prepared to take on a role in the post war nation-building effort. Only through initial occupation, replaced by international peacekeeping, a stable environment can be created that allows the development of freedom, democracy and prosperity for Iraq and peace for the region.

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